



**Our Righteous Mother Mary of Egypt
Whom The Holy Church Commemorates on April 1.**

When Mary was only twelve years old, she left her parents and departed to Alexandria, where she lived a depraved life for seventeen years. Then, moved by curiosity, she went with many pilgrims to Jerusalem, that she might see the exaltation of the venerable Cross. Even in the Holy City she gave herself over to every kind of licentiousness and drew many into the depth of perdition. Desiring to go into the church on the day of the Exaltation of the Cross, time and again she perceived a certain invisible power preventing her entrance, whereas the multitude of people about her entered unhindered. Therefore, wounded in heart by this, she decided to change her way of life and reconcile herself to God by means of repentance. Invoking our Lady the Theotokos as her protectress, she asked her to open the way for her to worship the Cross, and vowed that she would renounce the world. And thus, returning once again to the church, she entered easily. When she had worshipped the precious Wood, she departed that same day from Jerusalem and passed over the Jordan. She went into the inner wilderness and for forty-seven years lived a most harsh manner of life, surpassing human strength; alone, she prayed to God alone. Toward the end of her life she met a certain hermit named Zosimas, and she related to him her life from the beginning. She requested of him to bring her the immaculate mysteries that she might partake of them. According to her request, he did this the following year on Holy and Great Thursday. One year after this, Zosimas again went thither and found her dead, laid upon the ground, and letters written in the

sand near her which said: “Abba Zosimas, bury here the body of wretched Mary. I died on the very day I partook of the immaculate Mysteries. Pray for me.” Her death is reckoned by some to have taken place in 378, by some in 437, and by others, in 522. She is commemorated on the Fifth Sunday of Great Lent. Her life was recorded by Saint Sophronius of Jerusalem.

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Dismissal Hymn. Plagal of Fourth Tone.

IN thee the image was preserved with exactness, O Mother; for taking up thy cross, thou didst follow Christ, and by thy deeds thou didst teach us to overlook the flesh, for it passeth away, but to attend to the soul since it is immortal. Wherefore O righteous Mary, thy spirit rejoiceth with the Angels.

Kontakion. Second Tone

BY the toils of thy struggles, O God-inspired one, thou didst hallow the hardness of the desert. We glorify thy memory, as we honour thee with hymns, O Mary, glory of the righteous.

(Selections from *The Menaion* follow)

APRIL 1

Our Righteous Mother Mary of Egypt

VESPERS

For Lord, I have cried, *we chant the following Stichera:*

Plagal of Second Tone. Having laid up all their hope

THOUGH thy body, which had been * defiled with reckless abandon, * hindered thee from vision of * the august and holy things * thou didst long to see, * yet did thy consciousness * and thy clear perception * of deeds that thou hadst done before * graciously work a turn * in thee for the better, O godly-wise; * for when thou hadst looked on the pure * icon of the blest Mother of God, thou * on passing judgment * against thyself for all thy former sins, * didst freely worship the precious Wood, * Mary who art praised of all.

WORSHIPPING with joy of heart * the places hallowed by Christ God, * in thyself thou didst receive a saving viaticum * for the virtues' path: * filled with zeal and good cheer, * thou didst run the good course; and on crossing past the Jordan's streams, * thou dweltest eagerly * where the holy Baptist had lived before. * And by thy righteous way of life, * thou didst tame the passions' ferocity, * godly-minded-Mary, * our Mother ever-memorable in truth; * for thou hast quelled with thine abstinence * all the tumults of the flesh.

DWELLING in the wilderness, * thou didst religiously blot out * from thy soul the images * of thy passions, and with all * virtues and travails, * didst inscribe in thy soul * that most God like image; * and thou shonest so exceedingly * that thou didst lightly walk * on the very waters with nimble step; * and thou wast lifted in the air * during thine entreaties and prayers to God. * All glorious Mary, * as thou with boldness now dost stand before * the Saviour Christ, do thou fervently * pray Him in our soul's behalf.

Glory: both now. *Theotokion*

READY is that marriage feast * made for the heavenly Bridegroom; * even now the heralds cry; * why, O darkened soul, dost thou tarry willingly? * Truly thy garments are * all exceeding filthy with licentious deeds and lewd desires; * how shalt thou enter in, * thou unhappy wretch? But before the end * come fall down and cry aloud * to the Ever-virgin with all thy heart: Sprinkle me and cleanse me, O pure one, with the hyssop of thy prayers; * vouchsafe that bridechamber unto me, * so that I may magnify thee.

OIKOS

Thee, the lamb and daughter of Christ, we now acclaim with songs, O all-celebrated Mary, who though thou camest to light as a nursling of the Egyptians, didst flee their every error, and wast offered right well to the Church as a precious shoot; for in abstinence and prayer thou strovest in asceticism above the measure of human nature. Wherefore, through thy life and works thou wast exalted in Christ, O all-modest Mary, and in the Kingdom of Heaven thou art an honorable bride.

SYNAXARION

*The Month of April hath thirty days.
The day hath thirteen hours, and the night eleven.*

✠ On the first of this month we commemorate our righteous Mother Mary of Egypt.

Verses

Spirit rose up, flesh melted away erewhile;
Hide, O earth, the worn bones of Mary's body.
On the first of April died Mary, boast of the desert.

✠ On this day our righteous Father Barsanuphius of Optina reposed in peace in the year 1913.

✠ On this day we commemorate the holy new Hieromartyr, the Bishop Macarius, of the Monastery of Saint Macarius the Roman near Saint Petersburg, who was slain by the atheists in the year 1944.

By the intercessions of Thy Saints, O God, have mercy on us. Amen.



ΕΙΘΗΤ ΡΙΘΗΤΕΟΥΣ ΨΟΜΕΝ
ΤΗΡΟΥΗ ΨΗΟΕ ΣΥΡΡΛΙΟΤΙΟΝ
ΔΟ ΤΗΟΥ ΒΙΣΙΤ ΨΕ, Ο ΘΟΔ.

The Eight Righteous Women above are:
Ss. Photini, Melania the Roman,
Eudocia the Samaritan, Pelagia,
Macrina, Mary of Egypt,
Mary Magdalene, and Mary of Mesopotamia.